

Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1-18 (Canceled)

19. (New) A carton for a plurality of similar articles, such as bottles, arranged in rows wherein the carton is of substantially tubular structure comprising a bottom panel, a first side wall panel, a top panel, a second side wall panel and a means for at least partially closing the ends of the carton to prevent the articles from being undesirably dislodged, the carton further comprising an access means integrally formed in the carton walls for dispensing articles the access means being defined by a first weakened line of severance, extending completely across the top panel between opposed edges thereof and a second weakened line of severance extending completely across a side wall panel of the carton wall between opposed edges thereof, and by a further weakened line of severance extending in each of the opposed end closure means between each of the ends of the first and second weakened lines of severance the access means providing means for allowing the articles to be accessed through an opening formed when the access means is utilized and providing means for retaining the articles to prevent them from being inadvertently dislodged wherein the access means is structured and arranged such that the carton can be orientated to sit on either the bottom panel or its other side panel thereby changing the orientation of an axis of the articles.

20. (New) The carton of claim 19 wherein the articles are bottles each having a bottom, and wherein said bottles are disposed such that said bottoms abut said bottom panel.

21. (New) The carton of claim 19 wherein the weakened line of severance extends across one of said first and second carton side walls along an axis of the tubular structure.

22. (New) The carton of claim 19 further comprising a hand-hole punch through means for providing easy access to the dispensing feature.

23. (New) The carton of claim 19 wherein the bottom panel is larger than the top panel.

24. (New) The carton of claim 19 wherein the means for closing the ends of the cartons comprises four end flaps hingedly connected one each to said top panel, first side panel, bottom panel and second side panel.

25. (New) The carton of claim 24 wherein the ones of said end flaps hingedly connected to said first and second side walls include weakened lines of severance.

26. (New) A blank for forming a carton for a plurality of similar articles, such as bottles, arranged in rows wherein the carton is of a substantially tubular structure comprising a bottom panel, a first side wall panel, a top panel, a second side wall panel and a means for at least partially closing the ends of the carton to prevent the articles from being undesirably dislodged, the carton further comprising an access means, integrally formed in the carton walls and defined by a weakened line of severance, said weakened line of severance extending across the top panel between opposed edges of the top panel and across one of the carton walls between opposed edges of the carton wall, wherein a setup carton the access means provides means for allowing the articles to be accessed through an opening formed in one of its side walls when the dispensing feature is utilized and providing means for retaining the articles to prevent them from being inadvertently dislodged wherein the access means is structured and arranged such that the carton can be orientated to sit on either the bottom panel or its other side panel whereby changing the orientation of an axis of the articles.

27. (New) The blank of claim 26 in which at least two adjacent panels include transverse lines of weakness which are contiguous when the blank is formed into the carton.

28. (New) The blank of claim 27 wherein the means for at least partially closing the ends of the carton includes at least one additional line of weakness which cooperates with the transverse lines of weakness to form the dispensing feature when the blank is formed into the carton.

29. (New) The carton of claim 19 wherein the access means forms an article dispenser which is provided by a removable portion, defined by the weakened line of severance, said weakened line being an endless tear line which includes a first segment extending across said top wall along the tubular axis, a second segment extending across said first side wall along tubular axis of the carton and a pair of third segments formed respectively in said end closure walls to interconnect the first and second segments to form the endless tear line.

30. (New) The carton of claim 29 wherein each said end closure wall includes a pair of upper and lower end flaps and a pair of side end flaps, wherein each said third segment comprises an upper portion in the respective one of said upper end flaps and a lower portion in the one of said side end flaps that is hinged to said first side wall.

31. (New) The carton of claim 30 wherein each said third segment further comprises an intermediate portion in the respective one of said lower end flaps and wherein the intermediate portion interconnects said upper and lower portions.

32. (New) The carton of claim 30 wherein a part of said first segment defines a tear initiation tab, and wherein each said third segment extends downwardly from the top wall away from said first side wall so that an upper portion of each of said third segments adjoining the top wall is disposed at an obtuse angle with respect to said first segment.

33. (New) The blank of claim 26 wherein said means for at least partially closing the ends of the carton includes at least one additional line of weakness which cooperates with said transverse lines of weakness to form the dispensing feature when the blank is formed into the carton.